



INTERNATIONAL SISTER CITIES OF ROCHESTER NEWS

Volume 22, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2012

XIANYANG DELEGATION VISITS

Rochester was host to a special delegation from Xianyang in April. The group included Deputy Mayor Xhao Runmin and 4 department heads along with Deputy Manager of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Li Suying. The group spent a brief but very productive day in Rochester.

The group started at Aquinas Institute, which has been a partner in High School exchange with Xianyang since the beginning of the relationship more than 5 years ago.



Mayor Richards and Deputy Mayor Zhao reaffirm sister cities agreement

They toured the school and discussed plans for a group of students to come to Rochester this summer. Then the delegation was hosted to a family lunch at an Italian deli. This was one of the high lights of the day.

After lunch the group visited Eastman Business Park and discussed possibilities for development collaborations in the future. More on this in months to come. The group then visited with County

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PUERTO PLATA PROJECTS PROGRESS

Chris Luft reports that the Lima, NY, Dominican Hope's Conani pre-school expansion project is at last nearing completion and a Fall 2012 opening. Check out the video of the project, including interviews with parents and teachers, at the Dominican Hope website, www.dominicanhope.org/video.html. The committee is accepting donations to meet a portion of final costs of the project; contact Michael Leach,

(Continued on page 6)



New classrooms for Conani pre-school near completion

STRONG MUSEUM ALYTUS-ROCHESTER SCHOOL ART SHOW



Committee Launches Student Art Exchange Program

Working with the Churchville-Chili Middle School in the Rochester area and the Alytus Piliakalnis Main School in Lithuania, 6th grade students participated in a project creating artwork around a specific theme that expresses how they feel about their city/town and life in their town --

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From the President's Desk

A busy year of sister cities program activity is behind us, but it is not drawing to a close by any means. Much more is in the works.



All of our activities rely on the dedication and generous donations of time, energy, charm, and compassion of our volunteers—they cannot be successful without these resources. One great example of these volunteers is Huguette Neracker, who, to our great sadness, recently passed on to other realms of giving and caring. Outspoken and quick of wit, this bold, elegant lady was always there when needed to house a visitor, host events, or simply share her charm with us and make our guests feel important and welcome. We offer our deep condolences to Marwode, her husband, and to her family. We will miss her very much.

Les Knox and Patti Donoghue of our Board of Trustees also exemplify these volunteers. As at-large trustees, they share their time and talents with us to keep our program strong overall and help individual sister cities committees find needed resources. Les and Patti were re-elected to 3-year terms at our May board meeting.

Bill Sullivan, a long-time at-large trustee and volunteer, steps down this year. No one knows how long he has been involved, but we caught him in a photograph from 1984 when Mayor Tom Ryan of Rochester and Mayor Dick Jones of Waterford raised the Irish flag over the Sister Cities Bridge, inaugurating our seventh sister cities relationship. 120 visitors from our sister cities visited that year during Lilac Festival, Rochester's Sesquicentennial's "Sister Cities Week," to celebrate our 150th anniversary as a City and share time with each other. Perhaps that also kicked off Bill's special fondness for our sister city Rennes, France, as well. Bill, thank you for the many years of support you have provided us!

Sister Cities Week of the Rochester Sesquicentennial was the special project of then-City Council member Joan Hensler. Joan later became President of ISCOR, where she nurtured or initiated the development of the Velikiy Novgorod, Puerto Plata, and Hamamatsu sister cities relationships; the International Sister Cities Fair; state-wide sister cities conferences; and recruited several individuals to the Sister Cities board who provided important leader-

In Memoriam Huguette Neracker



It is with great sadness that I am informing you that our dear friend, Huguette Neracker, passed away last night. For many, many years, Huguette and her husband, Marwode, have been faithful supporters of ISCOR and in particular, have actively served on the Board of the Rennes-Rochester Sister Cities Committee since the 80's. She and Marwood have frequently hosted Rochester's foreign diplomats from our different Sister Cities and have made it their mission to help out the committees whenever they were able. Both Huguette and Marwode were members of several official delegations representing Rochester in Rennes.

Huguette was a friend whom we will all miss very much and whom we will never forget.... a witty, beautiful lady in every sense of the word and a true citizen diplomat.

Submitted by Terry Mathews-Desant

ship and support for many years thereafter. On February 17th Joan was awarded the Charles Crimi Lifetime achievement Award by City Council. It recognized her community service work, especially for her ISCOR involvement and her University of Rochester Medical School work of placing medical students in community service programs. Congratulations, Joan, for a well-deserved recognition, and thank you for your services to ISCOR and our community.

You'll read of many developing and on-going activities as you read through this issue of the ISCOR newsletter. Each could use your support and assistance in areas such as recruitment, work, fund raising, hosting, etc. Please contact our sister cities committee chairpersons to ask how you might help.

Thank you to all of our supporters who help us keep our sister cities program lively, vital, and beneficial to Rochester and our sister cities!

Carolee A. Conkley

2013 European Sister Cities Trip.

The proposed timing for the Eurotour, September/Early October 2013, is lining up with major events in several Sister Cities. Rennes will be celebrating the 55th anniversary of our relationship. We will be in Wuerzburg during the Main-franken Messe Fair.

If you have any questions, please contact Tom O'Connell at tommrosco@frontiernet.net or 749-0211.



RENNES, FRANCE 1958

Taylor Pestle, student at Honeoye Central High School, traveled to Rennes this March with her French class. Her full report will be published on the Rennes-Rochester website, currently under construction.

I recently took a trip of a lifetime when I went to Rennes, France, with a group of 35 of my classmates and four teachers. Before taking my trip to France, our school hosted 37 French students. When they came here in October, I hosted Claire, the daughter of Daniel Delaveau, the Mayor of Rennes.

We left for our trip to France March 8th and returned March 18th with a lot of memories and new lifetime friends. Upon arriving in Paris, we took a 5-hour bus ride to go to our correspondents' homes in Rennes, France.

During the week in Rennes, we would get up every morning and go to their school, Lycée Bréquigny, and then we would make our way to different attractions around Rennes. We visited Rennes, the Beaches of Normandy, Mont Saint Michel and Saint Malo. Every place we went to I would compare it to my town and home in Honeoye. It was just all so different, from the architecture to the scenery to just the everyday people walking around. It made me appreciate how different and unique every country is.

One thing that was the most different from our area was the mode of transportation. Every day we would walk to school and then, if we wanted to go into town, we would take a bus that would stop at anyplace you wanted. It ran all day long so you could get to wherever you wanted at any time. We rarely rode in a car, which is so much different than what I do at home. Also the food that they fed us was very different from the food we eat back at home, and all I can say is that it was delicious!

Staying with Claire and her family was one of the most amazing experiences of them all. Both her mom and dad welcomed me into their home with open arms and made me feel like I was in my own home. Every day they would make sure I had enough food and that I was enjoying my stay and they made it feel normal. Being able to stay with them made the best experience for my trip and I would not change anything about it.

The next morning when we reached the airport, all I could think about besides getting home was what a wonderful



WÜRZBURG, GERMANY 1964

Edward Hall of VisitRochester and Jamal Rossi, Executive Associate Dean of the Eastman School of Music will represent Mayor Richards at the 2012 Mozart Festival.

This will be Ed's final year as Rochester rep. He recently announced his retirement and his plans to pursue his passion for wildlife and landscape photography. Thank you, Ed, for the many years you have so ably served Rochester and the sister cities program!

We welcome Dean Rossi in this role of representing our community. During and since Mayor Georg Rosenthal's delegation's visit to Rochester in 2010, connections have been made with the Würzburg University of Music and the Hochschule für Musik. We hope that Dean Rossi will be able to develop these and establish further cultural connections between our communities.

Thank you, both!

and unreal experience we had in France. It was a trip with my friends and fellow classmates that made us closer and learn so much more about each other and France. This opportunity was something I will never forget and I want to thank my French correspondent and my French teacher for making this trip possible!

Basketball success, announces Eric Beaty of Rennes!



The Primetime Ballers of Rochester played the Bamberg, Germany, team in the the junior level Euro Pacé basketball international tournament in Rennes in March, pictured above. It ended with the score 35-15 in favor of Rochester. Anthony Iglesia of Rochester, reports the newspaper article, certainly the smallest player on the field, showed all his talent, speed and technicality by impressive 3-point baskets throughout the tournament. This is a real star in the

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CALTANISSETTA, ITALY 1965

Prof. Michele Curcuruto, a member of our Sister Cities Committee in Caltanissetta, has come to Rochester for three months to visit with friends he grew up with in Caltanissetta and who later immigrated to Rochester. Prof. Curcuruto, a geologist, is an expert on the history of the sulphur mines of Sicily and twice in the past has lectured at the Casa Italiana at Nazareth College.



R-L: Prof. Michele Curcuruto; former ATAD exchange student Laura Mandala, Calt; Karen Sterlace, Roch; Paolo Mandala, Calt.

Two students have exchanged for the 2011-12 school year. Alex Torchio from McQuaid Jesuit H.S. has studied at the Liceo Classico of Caltanissetta, and Carla Cordova from Caltanissetta will finish her senior year at Greece Athena H.S. One student will be exchanging next year and we are looking for a host family for her.

Submitted by Rosalba Pisaturo



REHOVOT, ISRAEL 1972

Youth Exchanges. Prompted by a visit to Rehovot by former committee Chair Sheila Weinbach, Rehovot Mayor Rachamim Malul recently sent a letter to Rochester Mayor Thomas Richards expressing interest in revitalizing connections with our community. Mayor Richards has responded in a very positive manner.

A youth exchange is being considered for this year, and perhaps a visit to Rochester by the Municipal Youth Band of Rehovot in 2013. Twice during the past several years, the band has played to sizeable audiences in the City Hall Atrium and Highland Bowl, and visited with other young musicians at the Eastman School.

Submitted by Dan Karin



BAMAKO, MALI 1975

Recent Political Instability Threatens Democracy in Mali

On March 22, 2012, mutinying Malian soldiers deposed President Amadou Toumani Touré and suspended the constitution of Mali. News reports indicated the soldiers resented the government's lack of support for military efforts in their fight against ethnic Tuareg separatists in northern Mali. Bamako, the capital of Mali and Rochester's sister city, was the center of the military coup.

The coup occurred one month before the country was to hold presidential elections. President Touré, who was elected in 2002 and re-elected in 2007, was reportedly not seeking re-election. The West African country of approximately 15 million people has enjoyed nearly 20 years of multiparty democracy. Over the last decade, the country has enjoyed a strong military partnership with the United States and France (its former colonizer) to fight expansion of terrorist groups in northern regions of Mali.

The coup was met with immediate international condemnation. The African Union suspended Mali's membership a day after the coup and threatened sanctions. The U.S. and France condemned the coup and called for immediate restoration of constitutional rule.

There were few reports of civilian casualties during the coup, however, several government officials including Bamako mayor Adama Sangaré were arrested and briefly detained by the putchists. Travel and commerce were curtailed after the military closed the borders and airports. Members of the Rochester/Bamako Sister Cities Committee received word that Mayor Sangaré was released on April 12th, he "returned to his home and is in good health".

In early April, amid growing international and economic pressures, the military agreed to relinquish government control under an agreement orchestrated by the Economic Community of Western African States. A transitional government was formed pending elections. The country continues to grapple with a humanitarian crisis as a result of the ongoing Tuareg insurgency. Tens of thousands of citizens residing in northern Mali have fled to neighboring states in Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso. The

(Continued on page 7)



KRAKÓW, POLAND 1973

Krakow trip deferred. The trip planned for Spring 2012 was deferred. Dr. Ralph Jozefowicz, MD, will visit the Kraków School for the Blind for an opportunities assessment during his May teaching period at the Jagiellonian University Medical School.

40th Anniversary. The sister cities committee and the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester are beginning plans for celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Kraków-Rochester sister cities relationship in 2013. Contact Michael Leach, 428-7319, if you are interested in participating.



WATERFORD, IRELAND 1983

The inaugural Irish Studies Conference held at St. John Fisher College on March 16th officially launched the new Irish Studies program. The program featured a wide range of relevant and interesting topics including The Irish American experience in Rochester, Genealogy, Frederick Douglass' relationship with Ireland and the recent developments and successes of the Waterford/Rochester twinning. The keynote speakers were former Congressman, the Hon. James T. Walsh and former Lord Mayor of Belfast, the Rt. Hon. Alex Maskey who discussed the ongoing peace process and ways in which Irish-Americans can foster continued economic and cultural ties with our Irish neighbors (sounds familiar???). Hats off to Dr. Tim Madigan for developing a truly first class seminar. More details are available at <http://sjfcirish.blogspot.com/>

To honor the new Irish Studies program, the Col. Patrick O'Rorke Memorial will be relocated from the High Falls Visitor's Center to SJFC. The O'Rorke Memorial Society has been reformed and a major dedication event is planned for October 2012. Contact Tom O'Connell to participate.

St. John Fisher College and the Waterford Institute of Technology continue to build their partnership brick by brick. Congratulations to Dr. Dianne Cooney-Miner, Dean of the SJFC Wegman's School of Nursing who was recently named a visiting professor at the Waterford Institute of Technology. Diane was a pioneer in the SJFC/WIT relationship and has been working with SJFC, WIT and the University of Barcelona on a collaborative Nursing Masters Program.

Rochester witnessed the largest Parade in its history on St.



HAMAMATSU, JAPAN 1996

We are very excited to report that four of our members will be traveling to Japan in late May. The members will of course take some time to enjoy Japan and all it has to offer but also will be meeting with Hamamatsu citizens and officials to discuss future plans for our relationship. During the trip books donated by the Strong Museum of Play will be presented to Hamamatsu. These books were collected during the Strong Museum of Play's *Five Friends from Japan: Children in Japan Today* exhibit. Each of the books contains messages written by visitors to the exhibit expressing their sympathies regarding the tsunami tragedy. We look forward to reporting on the events of the trip upon their return.

Submitted by Jonathan Schmidt



XIANYANG, CHINA 2007

(Continued from page 1)

Social Services commissioner Kelly Reed and later joined Rochester Police Chief James Shepard for a visit and brief tour of the PSB.

The delegation then joined Mayor Thomas Richards, Deputy Mayor Leonard Redon, and ISCOR president Carolee Conklin in a discussion before a City Hall reception which included affirming the sister city agreement. Deputy Mayor Redon and Councilmember Conklin hosted a dinner for delegation afterwards.

Discussions on economic development and student exchange are continuing.

Submitted by Mike Coniff

Patrick's Day as between 150,000 – 200,000 spectators crowded the streets to enjoy the award winning parade, sunshine and 70 degree weather on 3/17. It was great to see Carolee Conklin and City Environmental Services Paul Holohan Commissioner leading the way!

*Please contact Tom O'Connell regarding any of the above or the 2013 Eurotour at:
tomrosco@frontiernet.net or at 585-749-0211.*



VELIKIY NOVGOROD, RUSSIA 1990

On February 3, 2012, six visitors from Velikiy Novgorod and a facilitator from Moscow arrived in Rochester for a week-long visit. The visit was organized by Linkages and sponsored by Open World, a program of the Library of Congress. Through a competitive process, Open World selects host agencies to sponsor visits by small groups of young leaders from Russia and other Eastern European and Central Asian nations to the US to learn about American institutions and the US democratic process. Candidates must be under 45, must never have visited the US previously and must be a leader in their professional field.



Novgorod Delegation with Rochester Guides at Niagara Falls

The theme of this visit was prevention of substance abuse, especially among youth, and child welfare services for youth and families in crisis. Before arriving in Rochester, the group spent several days in Moscow and also in Washington, DC, for an orientation to American social institutions and for sightseeing. The group started the week in Rochester with a visit to the city's public market and also a day trip to Niagara Falls.

They spent the remainder of the week meeting with elected officials and other government leaders as well as with professionals in the areas of chemical dependency and child welfare. They met with Mayor Richards; City Councilperson Carolee Conklin. Among the agencies they visited were St. Joseph's Villa Life House, a residence for youth in recovery; Delphi Drug and Alcohol Center; Fairport High School; The Center for Youth Services; Child Protective Services at Monroe County DHS; SUNY Brockport and Nazareth College. The group also met with



PUERTO PLATA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1997

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ISCOR Treasurer, for donation instructions: 428-7319.

Rochester Firefighter Roberto Cabrera carried a firefighter training follow up survey developed by the sister cities committee to Puerto Plata in February 2012 to begin evaluation of how the Puerto Plata department was applying the training it received in July 2011 in the operations of the Puerto Plata Fire Department. Cabrera briefed Fire Chief Coronel Pedro Martinez, Sr., on the survey and spent



D'Mangu Friend-Raising Dinner and Dance a Success!

time with the firefighters. Earlier, Steve Farrington, Spanish teacher at MCC, delivered gloves to the department.

On March 26th the committee hosted an evening of dinner and dance at the D'Mangu Dominican Restaurant. Seventy-six committee supporters received an update on the firefighters project and enjoyed great food and music.

Contact Relton Roland, 473-5346 for further information

a representative of Rep. Louise Slaughter's office while in Washington. They paid a visit to State Sen. Joe Robach in his Greece office. Linkages wrapped up their visit with an American "Thanksgiving Dinner" at Lillian's Restaurant in Penfield for the group and their host families.

The delegation said that they were especially intrigued by the idea of social marketing as an approach to curb youth use of alcohol and drugs. They indicated they hoped to carry on a further dialogue with professionals in Rochester about applying the ideas they learned about in the US.

Submitted by Paul Caccamise



ALYTUS, LITHUANIA 2009

(Continued from page 1, Exhibit)

"What is special about my city to me".

Each city exchanged the artwork and displayed the artwork from both schools together along with information about each sister city and pictures of the school and class. Each city selected a public venue to display the artwork. In Rochester, the exhibit was launched at The Strong's National Museum of Play from May 7 – 11, 2012. A private reception, with more than 150 people in attendance, was held at the museum recognizing the students and teachers for their efforts.

The Committee selected three pieces of artwork from the students in both Rochester and Alytus, which best embraced the project and its theme, to receive 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards and stipends. These were presented during the reception. Also, the guests attending the reception were asked to vote for their favorite student artwork from each city and a special People's Choice award and stipend was given. Additionally, as part of the awards program, Lina Jureviciute, a high school student from Lithuania, currently participating in an exchange program with Rochester's School of the Arts, performed three songs to celebrate the opening of the exhibit.



Gates-Chili Middle School students and GCMS artist view the 40 pieces that will travel to Alytus. Photos by Erin Marozas

In Alytus, the artwork from both schools will be on display at their City Hall during the first week of June in conjunction with an "International Students Day" celebration. The award winners will be formally recognized in Alytus at that time, and a special People's Choice award and stipend will also be given to them.

Submitted by Jolanda Chesonis

(Continued from page 3) Rennes

making, if he continues to cultivate its natural qualities. [The Prime Ballers attended the April Rochester City Council meeting and presented Council with copies of the news reports and photos of their trip. Ed.]

Lycée St. Vincent/Aquinas Institute. Twenty-eight students and 3 teachers stayed with Aquinas host families from March 30-April 5 this year, our fourth time hosting since 2006. The week started with a pot-luck welcome dinner and a trip to Niagara Falls where some of the Rennais students experienced hail bouncing off their faces for the very first time! Strong Museum of Play; the George Eastman House, the Genesee Lighthouse followed. We also arranged to have a Native American speaker come to us from Ganondagan. The Rennais attended classes with their host students for 2 full days that week. Our final event was the farewell picnic at a lodge in Durand Eastman Park, where we had a cookout and sports on the lawn, wearing the exchange t-shirts we had made for the group. We all experienced a tearful sendoff the next morning, as close friendships had been formed. We are looking forward to traveling to Rennes and Paris next spring!

NYSAFLT Conference. Kim Dalheim and Casey Whittel presented information on high school exchanges in a highly rated workshop at the March 10th NYSAFLT conference.

Submitted by Penny Hensler, Jennifer Rybak, Candace Black and Ray Griswold

(Continued from page 4, Bamako)

conflict has forced the United Nations to appeal for millions in aid to address the crisis.

Submitted by Clyde Forbes

News of our Neighbors

Poltava-Irondequoit. April 2, 2012, the Irondequoit-Poltava committee sponsored a five-hour long "Pysanka - Ukrainian Easter Egg" demonstration by Irene Grassman and Nadia Tratch. Adults and children enjoyed a hands-on experience on the centuries-old art of Ukrainian Easter tradition. We are working with Josephine Perini and the Rochester International Council to host a group from Poltava through the Open World Program during the first week of June 2012. The program will focus on NGO's and will include visits and meetings with the Ukrainian community of Irondequoit and greater Rochester.

Vitre-Canandaigua. Former Rennes-Rochester co-chair Bonnie Dorschel and neighbors in the Canandaigua area are working to establish a sister cities connection with Vitre, France. This neighbor of Rennes was for many years a sister city with Greece, NY. Plans for a high school exchange are underway, including a trip in 2012 or 2013.

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Board Meetings 208A City Hall, 5:30pm, Open to public.
2012: Sept. 10th; Annual Reception TBA

Newsletter Editor Michael Leach

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